

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 LONDON 07327 01 OF 03 100952Z

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DLOS-09 OES-07 EPAE-00 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 NEA-11

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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5967

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 LONDON 07327

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TAGS: EWWT, PORG, IMCO

SUBJECT: IMCO: MARINE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION COM-
MITTEE (MEPC) 9TH SESSION - MAY 1-5, 1978

REF: STATE 93549

1. SUMMARY: MEPC IX HELD IN LONDON MAY 1-5, 1978. MR. PER ERIKSSON (SWEDEN) WAS RE-ELECTED CHAIRMAN AND MR. H. BOUSSOFFARA (TUNISIA) ELECTED TO FIRST TERM AS VICE-CHAIRMAN. PROGRESS WAS MADE ON SEVERAL ROUTINE AGENDA ITEMS AS NOTED BELOW IN TEXT. FRANCE PREDICTABLY INTRODUCED A NEW AGENDA ITEM "AMOCO CADIZ" WHICH INCLUDED PROPOSALS RELATED TO (1) SHIP DESIGN AND OPERATION, (2) RESPONSE TO ACCIDENTS, (3) SUBSTANDARD SHIPS, AND (4) THE FLAG OF CONVENIENCE PHENOMENON. THE TENTATIVE LIST OF SUBSTANTIVE ITEMS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE AGENDA OF MEPC X, XI, AND XII WAS EXPANDED TO ACCOMMODATE THE FRENCH PROPOSALS. SEC GEN SRIVASTAVA MADE A STRONG APPEAL FOR FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR ACTIVITIES IN ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL SUBMITTED A PAPER ASKING

UNCLASSIFIED

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PAGE 02 LONDON 07327 01 OF 03 100952Z

FOR A GREATER ENVIRONMENTAL EMPHASIS IN IMCO'S WORK. WITH REGARD TO THE AGENDA ITEM ON SUCCESSFUL TANKER SAFETY AND POLLUTION PREVENTION (TSPP) CONFERENCE IN FEBRUARY, THE U.S. DELEGATION EXPRESSED ITS APPRECIATION FOR THE POSITIVE SUPPORT BY IMCO AND MEMBER GOVERNMENTS OF THE U.S. INITIATIVES. THE COMMITTEE CONSIDERED THE TSPP CONFERENCE RESO-

LUTIONS 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16,
17, AND 18. END SUMMARY

2. THE STATUS OF INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS FOR WHICH IMCO IS RESPONSIBLE AND THEIR COMING INTO FORCE OR AMENDMENT WAS REVIEWED. THE IMPORTANCE OF BRINGING ALL IMCO CONVENTIONS INTO FORCE AND OF AN ANNUAL REPORT BY MEMBER STATES GIVING THEIR "RATIFICATION PROGNOSSES" WAS STRESSED. STATES WILL SOON BE REQUESTED BY THE SECRETARIAT, IN CONNECTION WITH THE RATIFICATION PROCESS FOR THE OIL FUND CONVENTION, 1971, TO UPDATE THE QUANTITY OF "CONTRIBUTING OIL" IN TONS (APPROXIMATELY THE AMOUNT OF OIL IMPORTED BY A COUNTRY IN THE PREVIOUS YEAR) IN ORDER THAT THE COMING INTO FORCE OF THE CONVENTION MAY MORE ACCURATELY BE DETERMINED.

3. ACTIVITIES OF OTHER BODIES RELATING TO MARINE POLLUTION WERE REVIEWED, IN PARTICULAR THE SECOND CONSULTATIVE MEETING OF CONTRACTING PARTIES TO THE LONDON DUMPING CONVENTION. IN THE REVIEW OF THE WORK OF IMCO SUBCOMMITTEES, THE REPORT OF THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON BULK CHEMICALS WAS DISCUSSED. ITS RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE DEFINITIONS OF "EN ROUTE" AND "ADEQUACY" WERE ACCEPTED IN PRINCIPAL. THE SUBCOMMITTEE WAS ASKED TO REVIEW THE TERM "ADEQUACY",
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 LONDON 07327 01 OF 03 100952Z

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT QUESTIONS RAISED BY SOME DELEGATIONS RELATING TO CAPACITY AND OTHER PHYSICAL ASPECTS OF RECEPTION FACILITIES.

4. IN ADDITION TO EXPRESSING ITS APPRECIATION FOR THE TSPP CONFERENCE RESULTS, THE U.S. DELEGATION ADVISED THE COMMITTEE OF ACTION BEING TAKEN BY THE U.S. TO IMPLEMENT THOSE RESULTS. IT BRIEFLY DESCRIBED THE NOTICE INFORMING THE U.S. PUBLIC OF THE RESULTS OF THE TSPP CONFERENCE AND THE ANTICIPATED PLAN FOR REGULATORY IMPLEMENTATION PUBLISHED IN THE APRIL 20, 1978 FEDERAL REGISTER. IT EMPHASIZED THAT THE U.S., IN IMPLEMENTING THE NEW STANDARDS, WOULD MAKE EVERY EFFORT TO MEET THE EFFECTIVE DATES AGREED AT THE CONFERENCE. RESOLUTIONS 14 AND 15 WERE SCHEDULED AS ITEMS TO BE CONSIDERED BY WORKING GROUPS AT MEPC X SO THAT STANDARD FORMATS FOR OPERATIONAL MANUALS FOR CLEAN BALLAST TANKS (CBT) AND CRUDE OIL WASHING (COW) COULD BE PREPARED. WITH RESPECT TO ENFORCEMENT OF CONVENTIONS, THE U.S. PRESENTED TWO PAPERS ON THE COAST GUARD AIRBORNE OIL SURVEILLANCE SYSTEM (AOSS) AND THE COAST GUARD

MARINE SAFETY INFORMATION SYSTEM (MSIS) AND PROMISED

UNCLASSIFIED

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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 LONDON 07327 02 OF 03 100917Z

ACTION EB-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 AF-10 ARA-14 EA-12 NEA-11
OIC-02 IO-14 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5968

UNCLAS SECTION 02 OF 03 LONDON 07327

TO INVESTIGATE THE LEGAL IMPLICATIONS OF MAKING MORE DETAILED MSIS DATA AVAILABLE TO OTHER GOVERNMENTS. THE U.K. DEL RAISED PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CARRIAGE OF PRODUCTS WHICH CONSIST OF A MIXTURE OF MARPOL 73 ANNEX I AND II SUBSTANCES. THE MATTER WAS REFERRED TO THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON BULK CHEMICALS. MATTERS RELATING TO THE APPLICABILITY OF ANNEX I OF 73 MARPOL TO FLOATING OR FIXED PLATFORMS ENGAGED IN SEA BED EXPLOITATION AND TO THE POSSIBILITY OF ARRANGEMENTS FOR TRANSFER OF OIL TO EMPTY TANKS IN DAMAGED TANKERS OR TO OTHER TANKERS OR ASHORE WERE DEFERRED PENDING DEVELOPMENT OF FURTHER INFORMATION.

5. PROVISION OF RECEPTION FACILITIES: DRAFT GUIDELINES ON MEANS FOR INSURING THE PROVISION AND MAINTENANCE OF ADEQUATE RECEPTION FACILITIES IN PORTS FOR GARBAGE WERE APPROVED BY THE COMMITTEE WHICH ALSO URGED MEMBER STATES TO RESPOND TO CIRCULARS 38 AND 62 (THE U.S. HAS NOW MADE AN INTERIM RESPONSE). A WORKING GROUP CONSIDERED THE EFFECT
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 LONDON 07327 02 OF 03 100917Z

ON THE NEED FOR RECEPTION FACILITIES OF SEGREGATED BALLAST TANKS (SBT), CBT, COW, AND OF REQUIREMENTS FOR EXISTING OIL TANKERS ENGAGED IN SPECIFIC TRADES TO USE RECEPTION FACILITIES. THE WORKING GROUP BELIEVED THAT SBT, CBT, AND COW WOULD DECREASE THE AMOUNT OF RECEPTION FACILITIES REQUIRED, BUT NOTED THE DIFFICULTIES IN CALCULATING PRECISE VALUES. THE WORKING GROUP ALSO CONSIDERED ADDITIONAL MEASURES WHICH COULD BE TAKEN TO PROMOTE THE PROVISION OF RECEPTION FACILITIES BUT DID NOT PRODUCE ANY NOTABLE RECOMMENDATION.

6. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES: THE COMMITTEE EXPRESSED APPRECIATION FOR THE VARIOUS TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO DEVELOPING COUNTRY PERSONNEL THROUGH TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDS FROM UNEP, UNDP, AND SIDA. THE SECGEN AND THE REPRESENTATIVE OF UNEP MADE CLEAR THAT THERE WERE PRESENTLY INSUFFICIENT UNEP FUNDS AVAILABLE TO FINANCE ANY FURTHER EXPANSION OF THE PROGRAM. THE COMMITTEE TOOK NOTE THAT THIS LACK OF FUNDS WOULD BE A SERIOUS HANDICAP TO FUTURE ACTIVITIES ESPECIALLY IN VIEW OF THE EXTRA DEMANDS IMPOSED BY THE REQUIREMENT TO MAKE THE OUTCOME OF THE TSPP CONFERENCE MORE WIDELY KNOWN.

7. FRANCE PROPOSED A NUMBER OF ITEMS TO BE ADDED TO THE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAM TO TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE AMOCO CADIZ DISASTER. THEY WERE REDUCED TO THE FOLLOWING ITEMS: STEERING SYSTEMS, PROPULSION AND ELECTRICAL POWER PLANTS, REPORTING SYSTEMS, RENDERING ASSISTANCE REGIMES, ANTI-POLLUTION MEASURES, SUB-STANDARD SHIPS, FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE, UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 03 LONDON 07327 02 OF 03 100917Z

AND TRAFFIC SEPARATION SCHEMES. ACTION ON THESE ITEMS IS EITHER REFLECTED IN THE MEPC WORK PROGRAM AND ACTION PLAN OR BEING REFERRED TO OTHER COMMITTEES WITHIN IMCO FOR ACTION AND/OR ADVICE. THE COMMITTEE REPORT WILL REFLECT IN DETAIL THE SUBSTANTIAL EXCHANGE WHICH OCCURRED WITH REGARD TO THIS ITEM. FRANCE REITERATED ITS INTENTION TO PROPOSE THAT THE IMCO COUNCIL SET UP AN AD HOC WORKING GROUP TO CONSIDER PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH FLAGS OF CONVENIENCE. LIBERIA ANNOUNCED AN OPEN MARINE BOARD INVESTIGATION ON AMOCO CADIZ DISASTER

WILL BE HELD IN LONDON STARTING MAY 16. IT NOTED THAT THE RESULTS OF THE FRENCH AND LIBERIAN INVESTIGATIONS INTO THE CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT HAD NOT YET BEEN CONCLUDED AND EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT IN THE LACK OF COOPERATION RENDERED BY FRANCE IN MAKING AVAILABLE TO LIBERIA APPLICABLE VESSEL DOCUMENTS AND OTHER DATA. IN RESPONSE FRANCE STATED THAT NATIONAL LAW REQUIRED SUCH INVESTIGATIONS BE CONDUCTED IN SECRECY.

8. OTHER MATTERS DEALT WITH BY THE COMMITTEE INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING:
COMPREHENSIVE ANTI-POLLUTION MANUAL: THE COMMITTEE APPROVED SECTION II (CONTINGENCY PLANNING) OF THE MANUAL AND THE MECHANISM FOR REVIEW OF THE DRAFT SECTION IV (METHODS OF DEALING WITH OIL SPILLAGES) SUBMITTED BY THE U.S. THE MATTER OF SALVAGE WILL BE ADDRESSED AT MEPC X.
OILY WATER SEPARATORS, FILTERS, AND RELATED

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UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 LONDON 07327 03 OF 03 100911Z
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UNCLAS SECTION 03 OF 03 LONDON 07327

EQUIPMENT: THE FORMAT FOR THE LIST OF RESOLUTION A 393 X APPROVED EQUIPMENT WAS REVISED. THE EQUIPMENT WAS DIVIDED INTO THREE TYPE CATEGORIES. THE LIST WILL ALSO INCLUDE A COLUMN INDICATING THE DATE OF SATISFACTORY TESTING AND APPROVAL BY INDIVIDUAL ADMINISTRATIONS. THE SECRETARIAT WAS

REQUESTED TO DEVELOP A QUESTIONNAIRE FOR DISTRIBUTION SOLICITING INFORMATION ON ADMINISTRATIONS' POLICIES TOWARD RECIPROCAL AGREEMENTS FOR THE ACCEPTANCE OF PREVIOUS TESTING DONE BY OTHER ADMINISTRATIONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH RESOLUTION A 393 X. FRIENDS OF THE EARTH PAPER: TOWARDS THE END OF THE MEETING, FRIENDS OF THE EARTH INTERNATIONAL SUBMITTED A PAPER CRITICAL OF THE LACK OF REPRESENTATION ON NATIONAL DELEGATIONS OF THOSE WHOSE PRIMARY COMMITMENT IS TO ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AND SUGGESTED THE INITIATION OF "INDEPENDENT STUDIES, PARTICULARLY POLLUTION RISK ANALYSIS AND ENVIRONMENTAL COST/BENEFIT STUDIES". THIS SUBMISSION WILL BE CONSIDERED INTERSESSIONALLY.

9. THE WORK PROGRAM FOR FUTURE SESSIONS WAS
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 02 LONDON 07327 03 OF 03 100911Z

UPDATED TO TAKE INTO ACCOUNT THE TSPP CONFERENCE RESULTS AND THE FRENCH PROPOSALS STIMULATED BY THE AMOCO CADIZ DISASTER. THE NEXT MEETING IS SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 4-8, 1978. US DEL SENDS.

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